

The Labor Problem and the Negro.

The labor problem, like the poor, is always with us. Doubtless it is because it is poor that it always is with us. Our labor in the South is poor because it is ignorant labor. There has been much said about the negro as a laborer, and it has been claimed that no other can compare with him for the conditions that exist in the Southern States. What are those conditions? A mild but not enervating climate, except in certain localities; a soil of great variety and easily cultivated; ample woodlands, numerous streams, excellent water, markets within easy reach and crops that are always marketable.

What other conditions does the white man want to labor under? None of these are peculiar to the negro.

The negro has been a curse to the South, and this is said with the kindest feeling to the negro. While he was a slave he affixed a stigma to labor which it wears to-day. Because the laborer was a slave, no freeman was satisfied to labor; and because the negro is the laborer to-day no white man is willing to labor—if he can help it.

If it is doubted that the negro is a poor laborer let any farmer answer who runs twenty plows. How many of those twenty negroes can he trust his farm with for a week? Though they may have been with him for years, know all about the farm and the stock and the run of the work, perhaps not one can take the farmer's place for a few days. More than that, unless his eye is on them day after day, they will do something wrong and have to undo it, and he knows it.

Labor has not been respectable in the South, and it will be many a day before it is. Farm labor is not esteemed as a business, though many white men are forced into it. We do not mean farming or a position of manager, but hired labor. The professions and mercantile pursuits have been crowded for years, and no nation nor tribe has produced greater intellects in these classes. But what has the South derived from its labor classes? What invention has a Southern mechanic given her or what improvement in labor methods has he discovered?

Manual labor has been discounted in the South wherever the laborer is the negro. That is the chief reason why our Agricultural Colleges are not patronized as those in the North and West are. It is not only that they are richer and we are poorly equipped. But those young men do the work they expect to do on the farms when they go home to hire out or labor on their own farms. Here the young man's ambition is higher. He don't expect to plow or milk cows or drive a team—he expects the negro to do that—and he won't go to college to fit himself for a laborer's work. We deplore the fact, but it is true. It would be far better for the South if he would. The negro is here to stay. Lecturers and theorists may say the races must be separated, but the negro will be the la-

borer in the South for generations yet to come. And the only hope for the South is in the education of the negro. We have suffered for half a century from ignorant free negro labor. We will suffer in like manner for another half century if free negro labor continues to be ignorant. We must educate the negro in self defence. We must make him more intelligent that he may do better work, raise the standard of labor, and remove the stain of contempt from a calling that is as old as Adam and respectable everywhere but in the South.

It is useless to say we are doing enough for the negro now. We are not doing enough for our own good. Governor Candler, of Georgia, said facetiously, "The more we teach the negro 'hie, haec, hoc,' the less he knows about gee, haw, buck."

But the more we teach him about the laws of plant growth and the physiology of the animals on the farm, the better plants and animals will we raise and the more he learns about the principles of building the more his labor is worth to him who builds the house.

By all means educate the negro as well as the white children.—The Southern Farmer.

The Alabama State Senate has passed the bill previously passed by the House, prohibiting boycotts, blacklists, bans or picketing in that State, and providing punishment therefor.

EFFECTUAL

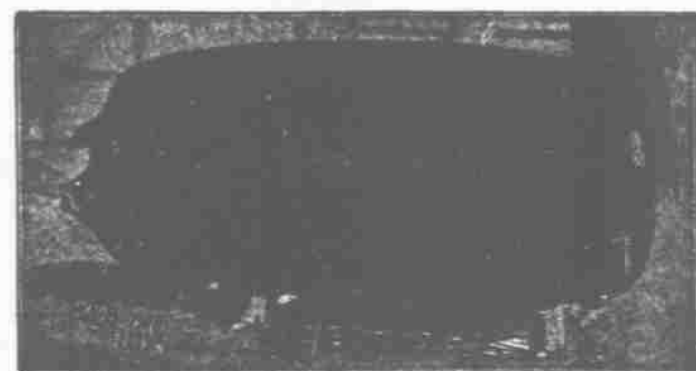
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Nearly 1,000 negroes have packed their belongings and are prepared to emigrate to South Africa from Mississippi. They will form the advance guard of an army of their race which, it is said, will leave the State because of the well known anti-negro views of Governor-elect Vardaman.

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